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## **Press Briefing on Multinational Experiment 4**

**Lieutenant General Bob Wood, Deputy Commander, U.S. Joint Forces Command**  
**Ms. Barbara Stephenson, State Dept's S/CRS Director of Planning**  
**Department of Defense**  
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### **On the Record Briefing** **Multinational Experiment 4: Transforming Civil-Military** **and Coalition Relationships to Drive Real-World Change**

(1:00pm EST)

**GENERAL WOOD:** Thank you so much.

Again, nice to meet you. My name's Lieutenant General Bob Wood. I'm from the U.S. Joint Forces Command. I would like to talk to you today about Multinational Experiment 4 and particularly our partnership with the State Department in this experiment. It looks very promising. We're very anxious to get underway.

Our mission in Joint Forces Command is to be mission ready with joint capable forces and support the development and integration of joint, interagency and multinational capabilities. So it's a natural fit for the Joint Forces Command to be involved in Multinational Experiment 4. It fits the mission and it's really the right thing to do as we adapt to the challenges we face. We're always looking for ways to streamline and improve our capabilities. In this case, to working coalitions, work jointly, and work with our interagency partners.

During this experiment, this is the fourth one of a series now, we'll work with team members from the State Department and other US government agencies practicing our civil/military coalition processes and building the coalition planning capabilities.

The idea here is to practice together and prepare ourselves for joint interagency and multinational environments of the future. MNE4 is part of that transformational change in our relationship with coalition partners as well.

MNE4, if you'll allow me to use that acronym, MNE4 will help us create new means and methods to strengthen systems, hardware, processes and communications that inter-operate, that can operate together collectively. This is so critical to the success of our future coalition military commissions.

I would say that intellectual change leads physical change in this case, in which our practicing, if you will, in scrimmage, can play out at game day together.

We were planning the first in this series of experiments even before 9/11. In 2001 Joint

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Forces Command started the Multinational Experiment series with the goal of improving the level of partner nation involvement in developing new ideas for coalition operations. This is part of the concept development and experimentation path that Joint Forces Command has been embarking on since really 1998 when the transformation mission was assigned to Joint Forces Command.

The first experiment involved four nations and 50 people. Approximately 800 people from eight nations and NATO will be participating in this year's three week event. It's a long event, but it allows us to play a number of different turns in the planning that are important to understanding the processes.

The series has become the premier venue for multinational collaboration and concept development and experimentation.

NATO will begin the experiment on February 20th with focus training in Turkey while all other Multinational Experiment nations will complete national training that week in the train-up for the exercise. All 800 participants will be engaged beginning February 27th.

MNE4 features two parallel headquarters. One will be staffed by NATO at a single location in Turkey and the other will be a distributed headquarters spread out around the Multinational Experiment community. Essentially that boils down to nine or ten sites on a distributed network playing in a common, simulated space of operations.

There will be a simultaneous review of what we call effects-based planning. That will be done at these two different sites and then comparatively reviewed at the end of the experiment to learn what we need to learn about processes from coalition, joint and multinational operations.

The interagency will participate throughout the experiment primarily through the coalition task force and via the Multinational Interagency Group which Barbara will talk about in a little more length.

The State Department's Coordinator for Reconstruction and Stabilization will establish this parallel network to connect the Multinational Interagency Group to the US interagency community in Washington, DC. Each of the other coalition nations will establish similar electronic links to their respective interagency communities.

During the second week of the experiment, a host of subject matter experts will gather to discuss specific topics related to the development of this Multinational Interagency Group.

This experiment will explore ultimately the unified use of key elements of power such as diplomacy, development and defense for success in focusing on complex security environments. It is important to understand how to plan in the stability, security, transition and reconstruction cases of any operation.

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In MNE4 this effort is called Effects-Based Approach to Multinational Operation. This concept is central to this experiment and will help in development of planning tools.

Over the past two years various partners in different areas have brought solutions. Now we'll play out these solutions in this culminating event.

Technology is important but not central, I would say. It provides the context; it connects our partners and allows us to automate some of our planning processes. More important are the relationships that are being built through this experiment. But I would like to highlight that for the first time we've been able to integrate three simulation environments. The French simulation, the United Kingdom simulation, the United States simulation, and this confederation or federation of models in fact is a finalist for the 2005 Department of Defense Modeling and Simulation Award for modeling and simulation integration.

I'd like to highlight our partnership with State Department's Coordinator for Reconstruction and Stabilization. This is a partnership that continues to grow, is extremely active, and I would offer extremely productive. Together with the Office of the Coordinator for Reconstruction and Stabilization, I believe that development in this exercise and this experiment called the Multinational Interagency Group will be key to our understanding of our future together in the planning processes we must conduct.

Over the past few months we've developed in fact a group handbook that will be essentially proven in this exercise and improved and printed, that will help us guide planning between the interagency and the military actors of a coalition. I think this work with the Office, the State Department's Coordinator for Reconstruction and Stabilization, represents the very best of a growing partnership between the Department of Defense and the Department of State.

Barbara, I'd like to offer you an opportunity for some opening remarks, then we look forward to your questions afterwards.

**MS. STEPHENSON:** Thank you.

Again, I'm Barbara Stephenson. I'm the Director for Planning in the Office of the Coordinator for Reconstruction and Stabilization and we're in the State Department, but we're an unusual office in that we're interagency in both our function and our character. We're about 50, 55 people coming from State, DoD, AID, CIA, Department of Justice, Department of Labor. Very broad-based. Our job has been to try to build some interagency solutions to some problems like stovepiping and the inability to talk to each other.

S/CRS is very pleased to have been able to partner with Joint Forces Command to shape an ongoing transformation of the US Government. Particularly our focus has been on stabilization, reconstruction and conflict transformation challenges. Our focus is on

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harnessing all the elements of national power through whole of government solutions and integrating our own national whole of government solution with those of our international partners. So there's really no better forum for that than the Multinational Experiment which seeks to do exactly the same thing. It gives us space to operate and to practice these challenges, try out these challenges.

We need compatible concepts and structures for multinational collaboration. History has shown us over and over again that when we wait until we get on the ground to try to develop a joined-up strategy it's a little too late for an optimum outcome. We spend an awful lot of time deconflicting. So one of the real challenges we face is how do we create structures that will allow us to collaborate before we get on the ground.

The Multinational Experiment is catalyzing real world change. It's helping us develop concepts for how we plan before we get there, organize once we're on the ground, and then integrate our national and international efforts so we can help nations transition from conflict to peace, locally-led nascent peace with the host government in the lead.

We believe that earlier and better quality collaboration among USG agencies and with international partners will result in a significant improvement to US national security and indeed international security by allowing us to better align our strategic goals with the tools and resources that are necessary to achieve them, and by heading off the need to do so much deconfliction on the ground because we had a common understanding of what we were trying to achieve before we even got there.

We benefit enormously from being able to plan and operate on a multinational interagency basis. The MNE series has provided us an opportunity to deepen our collaboration with international partners and multilateral organizations like the UN, NATO and the EU and we're really pleased that in MNE4 the UN and the EU will join us as observers and participate in the subject matter expert discussions of some really key topics like what kind of police structures are best? Do you do better working off of individual contracts, contracts that hire individual policemen, or do you need formed police units? These kinds of questions that it's great to be able to get all of the practitioners together and to discuss them.

The UN and the EU are going through similar processes of transformation that we're going through, so questions that we face like what's "just enough planning" -- You know, when you bring people off doing into planning, where do you get the real value-added? We found that it was a very rich conversation with UN officials who were trying to achieve the same things.

So there's an awful lot of cross-fertilization and sharing of best practices that has already occurred within the Multinational Experiment because it's brought together people wrestling with similar problems and giving them a venue to discuss it and to figure out what the solutions might look like.

So what we like to say in the State Department where there's a natural suspicion of

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people who have time to do gaming and experiments, is that the Multinational Experiment actually drives real world change. It's actually bringing together people to solve real world problems and it's transformational in its impact.

If we're successful in developing the concepts and the capabilities that the Multinational Experiment is showcasing, it will allow us to bring about a much more rapid transition through conflict transformation to a locally led nascent peace which is what our office really pushes as the goal.

And success in this will result in far less loss in human life, far less resources to take us to that point, and far less time until we have built sufficient local capacity for us to move into a supporting role rather than the lead role.

With that, let me end and we'll take questions.

**MEDIA:** I'm Pam Hess with UPI.

Could you all give us a sense of what the scenario is that you're going to be dealing with in the experiment? And also talk about what material changes or what process changes you've made as a result of the previous exercises.

**GENERAL WOOD:** The exercise to this point has primarily focused on understanding the effects-based planning process. That is to say what sort of outcomes are we after, how to use all elements of national power, not just military, to accomplish that. But to do it in terms and discuss it in terms with coalition partners in common language, common lexicon. And now we have gone through a third series. We generated a process, a handbook on how to do that sort of planning, and now we're enabling that with some technology to allow us practice in execution in an experimental setting what kind of outcomes we may be able to not only accomplish, but even perhaps assess. So the assessment side of that experiment is key.

So this is really just an experimental venue. What we were after here was complexity. We wanted to make sure that we didn't under-challenge. We wanted to challenge the planning and make it a very complex political/military environment that really was primarily a commonly understood context by partners in the experiment. There are nine partners when you count NATO actually as one of them. So we were looking for a complex setting to challenge each of them, but a common context for problems. All of it hypothetical. So we created a scenario to drive that sort of planning process.

**MEDIA:** It's hard for us to write about this without being able to really explain what the scenario is, because you start writing things about planning processes and your editors spike the story. So could you give us something sort of material that we can hang onto?

**GENERAL WOOD:** Right now the scenario as we've developed it has used the common context of Afghanistan, for instance.

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**MEDIA:** Is it called Afghanistan or is it a made-up country?

**GENERAL WOOD:** It's called Afghanistan. It's also simulation supported, so we literally have to have geography that relates to the time/space decisions that the planners have to make.

**MEDIA:** And is it Afghanistan-2003, 2001, or is it --

**GENERAL WOOD:** Hypothetical. It's essentially to create a complex setting in the geography called Afghanistan and then allow the planning processes, in this case political/military integration to work on whatever problems the --

**MEDIA:** What's the hypothetical setup there? It's just Afghanistan, like what is it you guys are trying to plan for --

**GENERAL WOOD:** Stabilization, the security, stabilization, transition and reconstruction. The kind of work that's going on and promoted in some of the Department's outcome, looking at stability operations.

**MEDIA:** I'm sorry, I don't mean to monopolize, but when your planners sit down, what are you handing to them? What are you saying? Fix this problem. Because if you come in, everybody's understanding of Afghanistan is going to be different and driven by events on the ground. So what's the scenario?

**GENERAL WOOD:** In any of these experiments that we do there's what's called essentially an event list, so it's driven with hypothetical events and these hypothetical events cause natural questions to arise, or staffs to work on and commanders to decide about. So in a hypothetical sense we have created over 268 hypothetical events that are introduced into the common context of Afghanistan to play out then and drive decision processes which may or may not be enabled. It depends on the experimental outcome by the technology, by the terminology, by the approach that's taken for planning.

**MEDIA:** To follow up, what is the triggering event that got you involved in this hypothetical Afghanistan?

**GENERAL WOOD:** I think we started with the forces in place.

**MEDIA:** The current forces in place?

**GENERAL WOOD:** On a force that was representative of the partner nations, not a current force construct but an array of forces that were in this geographic space. Then the hypothetical issues are presented and the planning staffs have to respond.

**MEDIA:** Ann Roosevelt, Defense Daily.

I have a question. You presented a sort of whole piece in the middle of, not connected to

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anything. And I wondered how connected the MNEs are to things that Joint Forces Command does such as Unified Quest games where these questions came up time after time, year after year, and what they discovered. Does that feed in and help and push it forward? Or does it not connect?

**GENERAL WOOD:** Oh, it connects.

**MEDIA:** Feedback, or -- Can you explain that?

**GENERAL WOOD:** The Multinational Interagency Group was one of the findings in Unified Quest, so we felt that we had to develop some approach to integrating national and multinational efforts -- better planning, better integration, frankly, better accounting - - for the tools available in other instruments of national power. So I would say it's really a step along a path in which the Unified Quest and Sea Viking and other type of wargaming done at Joint Forces Command has shown we needed to figure out how to plan together, figure out what communication sources needed to be in place, figure out what sort of tools would enable us to get past different lexicon. So that's why we're excited about it, because it has such a broad array of actors distributed so, I mean around the globe. It brings together partners who may in the future have to work together who in experimentation can practice today to execute tomorrow.

**MEDIA:** So will this show up in UQ-06? Your results here?

**GENERAL WOOD:** It will inform it. It will inform it, very much so.

**MEDIA:** Julian Barnes, US News.

The Quadrennial Defense Review talked about improving allies' ability to do stabilization operations. How does this fit into that? What sort of concrete improvement do you want to see from allies then?

**GENERAL WOOD:** One of the points made in the QDR was that we're shifting from Department-centric approaches to interagency solutions. So this is right on that center line. It carries that to really supporting the Department, supporting and enabling other agencies working towards common objectives with an understanding of each other's capabilities and interests.

**MEDIA:** Who are the partners in this exercise?

**GENERAL WOOD:** Let me make sure I get them all right. The United States, of course, NATO, United Kingdom, France, Germany, Australia, Finland, Sweden, and Canada.

**MEDIA:** No Muslim countries?

**GENERAL WOOD:** No, not in this setting, not in this case right now. Again, this has

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been developed over a period of time. This is the fourth iteration, so we continue to expand. Frankly it went from four nations now to ten nations and we continue to look for the ability to incorporate.

**MEDIA:** Have you tried to bring Muslims into it?

**GENERAL WOOD:** In this series we have not had the opportunity.

**MEDIA:** Dale Eisman with Virginia Pilot.

Forgive me, I came in late. Is there an adversary force in this experiment, where someone's trying to foil your plans or mess you up?

**GENERAL WOOD:** It's more along the lines of these injects, of these over 268 events. So it's action/reaction.

What it allows us to do in the experiment, given that it's all hypothetical, is we can increase the volume or pressure in one area and decrease it in another. In the experiment design that's three weeks long, we can constantly vary the stimulus, the pressure, and evaluate the outcomes across the array of actors, so it's more generated by the experimental design than it is in free thinking, because this is as much an evaluation as it is an exercise. An evaluation of alternative methods of planning, alternative tools, and building the first cut at some of these planning tools that we'd like to share with the interagency.

**MEDIA:** Barbara, I heard you speak at Quantico. It was really interesting. I'm very interested in your office and how it works.

You mentioned something important, I think, and that is you're kind of straddling a cultural divide between State and the Pentagon with this reference to folks that have time to model. I mean I feel the military bristling. But you have to model, otherwise you screw it up.

Can you talk to us about your job there and what you're trying to do? Obviously with Iraq and Afghanistan there's been a lot of complaints that State really hasn't shouldered much of the burden. So what is the challenge that you're working with sort of culturally within State and with the Pentagon and how are you going to push that? Because obviously much of the QDR also depends on sort of your office's shoulders, you guys taking the lead.

**MS. STEPHENSON:** Specifically the work that I've been engaged in is trying to create partners for strategic planning and for planning all the way through. And we're the first to recognize in the State Department, I do come from a State Department political officer background, that we really are gifted reactors but we are not -- strategic planning is not a core part of what our culture is about and that we do need to have a strategic planning capability so that we can partner with the military early in shaping the design for these so

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that it is infused with the very relevant expertise that we civilians bring to it and frankly, that we can help bring international expertise to bear on it as well because that's another one of our core competencies.

So we've done an awful lot of work looking at the process and what kind of processes would actually entice my colleagues in the State Department to take out time from a 14 hour day managing the ins and outs of a relationship to devote some time to strategic planning in a way that would be intuitive and meaningful to them, and that would be intuitive and straightforward and streamlined enough for us to bring international players in. Because we are talking about expanding the number of players that we bring in early on to think about what we're trying to achieve.

Process really does matter, and I think we're starting to understand that the differences in the processes between the major partners does get in the way of our being able to approach problems in a common way. So we talk sometimes about creating an architecture to permit early collaboration. One of the reasons we don't talk until we get in the field is that it's so hard to. Who would we invite?

**GENERAL WOOD:** We are using as one of the primary technical means of creating that environment what's called IWS, Information Work Space. We have issued over 600 licenses for players, if you will, who can come up on this common collaboration network. That is including the multinational and interagency players who can literally enter the collaboration space and discuss an issue that has been prompted by one of the injects that came in or to promote some other collaborative outcome that we're after.

So it's pretty remarkable that this has proliferated now to where it is really a common information domain where that gets partners to the table and it gets them comfortable working together.

What's very revealing, this is not just one event. This has been going on for two years and in two years of planning workshops, limited objective experiments, some supporting training work and all political/military workshops, we have gotten to know each other in ways we never have in the past, to understand the way we really deconstruct problems and put solutions back together again, the terminology which resonates and that which does not. Then bring that now in culmination, in this exercise, MNE4.

By the way, there's an MNE5 that's two years from now, and it very likely will carry us effects-based planning to effects-based operations which we're doing now, execution of the effects-based approach. But now towards what we call unified action or whole of government that Barbara said.

So really a logical next step is to take what we're learning in processes, what we're learning in lexicon, what we're learning in knowledge management, frankly, and now carry that to a scenario that allows us to really play the interagency into the two years hence exercise with two years of cycles of development from here until then. So it's very encouraging to see.

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On the 19th of May we will actually outbrief our findings in this experiment in Brussels to a very large NATO body and all other partners who were involved in the exercise in which we'll kind of go through our findings and describe not only what we found but where we need to go, and that will help us build immediately into the next series of the experiment.

**MEDIA:** Ted McKenna, with E-Defense.

You mentioned having to do too much deconfliction. I was wondering if you can give a couple of examples of that. Also can you talk about simulation, what exactly is that? Is it just looking at computer screens?

**MS. STEPHENSON:** On the deconfliction, it's something that I think most of us who worked closely on the Balkans, we have a lot of lessons learned and we also had a great issue workshop with the Limited Objective Experiment [that's in] MNE4 back in August when we were in Sidney, Australia, where we had a team of people who had been in Afghanistan. Just with the lead nations pillar concept, for example, you do end up with somebody's in charge of police, somebody's in charge of justice, somebody's in charge of counternarcotics, somebody's in charge of training the Afghan National Police. If you don't have a chance to talk to each other before you do all those plans, those plans don't necessarily complement each other. So you spend a lot of time in the field looking at how what you're doing in your pillar affects what I was trying to do in my pillar and how we need to now sort that stuff out. It takes a lot of time in the field because we don't have a chance to actually work out against a common strategy before we get there.

Does that make sense to you? Have you encountered that?

**MEDIA:** Some people might be doing the same job and they just haven't --

**MS. STEPHENSON:** Or that they're at odds with each other because of what your goal statement was, and the next person, you design a program that inadvertently, something you might need to do in your counternarcotics pillar, for example, is really detrimental to what I was trying to do in the rule of law and building a prospective capability because we didn't have a chance to talk. So you figure it out, these things happen, these things take up an awful lot of time out in the field.

If you think you're supposed to be building a strong central government and another group thinks they're supposed to be building a strong provincial government, these things will have a tension on each other that needs to be resolved really before you let lots of two year contracts and then you're trying to reverse engineer so they stop doing this.

There's a real value-added to being able to see what each other's planning to do before you get out there, to be sure that you achieve synergy when possible, but certainly that you have not both made, you haven't gone at things in a way that actually undercuts each other's programs. And it's inadvertent almost always, but it can take up an awful lot of

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time.

**GENERAL WOOD:** In simulation that's hard to show all that, but I mentioned that there's a French simulation, a German simulation and a United States simulation. Correction, Germany or UK. Germany, France and the United States. Three different types of simulations. One simulation is really semi-automated forces. It literally moves players on the battlefield or players in the operating environment around. There's another that models intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance and how that works in this space, and there's another that deals with everything from ground combat to humanitarian support. So by being able to take these three nations' models, put them together, we can really model the complexity where we can actually see the action and its reaction, whether it could be humanitarian relief or it could be a movement of intelligence or surveillance assets, or the execution of small scale contact or combat. So really getting these three models to talk to each other was worth the two years, let alone being able to play in a very rich operational environment and show that complexity in very near real time and really to get a representation for some sort of common operating picture that nine players will be able to see from 10 or 11 distributed sites.

**MEDIA:** Do each of those countries handle those three different simulations?

**GENERAL WOOD:** We brought them together and we created a federation so we can play back out to all the distributed stations this common environment that links intelligence and surveillance and humanitarian relief and the civil/military relations that we have to do.

**MEDIA:** Do you remember which country [inaudible]?

**GENERAL WOOD:** Well, Alliance is French; JOANA is German; and JSAF is the United States.

**MEDIA:** I was wondering, this is Sebastian Sprenger with Inside the Pentagon, if you could give us a little bit better of a sense of the nature of the conflict. Are there elements of what the White House calls violent extremism in there? You mentioned counternarcotics earlier. Is this irregular warfare?

**GENERAL WOOD:** It is not high end conventional warfare. It is meant to represent an environment that stresses stability operations so we'll have asymmetric threats, the potential for low scale conflict, irregular warfare, but it also is a security, and so there are normal security challenges that would exist in a complex environment.

The transition mission has to be played against various political and military elements who enter the operating space or are leaving the operating space. And reconstruction is an element of the game so there has to be a certain amount of just the civil/military demands on everything from electricity to agriculture to other elements of the civilian infrastructure. So it is primarily low end oriented, I would say in the simplest way, on stability operations. What that means in terms of execution in a civil/military

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department.

**MEDIA:** Is there indeed a counternarcotics element?

**GENERAL WOOD:** I don't recall if that's one of the injects, one of those 268 injects.

**MEDIA:** That would go with the Afghanistan picture.

**GENERAL WOOD:** Well, there would be something in Afghanistan that dealt with criminality just like in any other society. So there has to be a police function to the exercise and coordinated. So whatever the stimulus might be, it would have to take that sort of means to solve it. How it's coordinated with the country team or how it's coordinating with the military security function is really the challenge we would have to look at. So it's really action/reaction on the criminality or police function.

**MEDIA:** [inaudible], Defense News, [inaudible].

Can you talk to us about multi-level security? That's been an issue, so how are you properly simulating it? Also is it an issue for the simulations to work together as well and --

**GENERAL WOOD:** Absolutely. Primarily bilateral arrangements in terms of our security relations. This is a group that's spent its two years in limited objective experiments, and primarily bilateral agreements with regard to sharing of information and involvement in this exercise. So it's country by country, pair by pair, and ultimately collectively. We're comfortable with what information, how it's being transmitted, how it's being played, and again that this is the fourth time we've done this. It's fairly well practiced and we're pretty comfortable with it but it is something we have to watch for.

Now that's in the game and the exercise. I don't think it is very far from the actual execution that we always have to look at our information sharing regime and that the bilateral arrangements or the coalition arrangements have to be a consideration in the early planning, and then accounted for in execution. So it's really teaching us in experimentation, frankly, what we've found to be true in actual operations.

**MEDIA:** Josh [inaudible].

Talking about deconflicting, coordinating, reconstruction and relief, is there any effort to bring in NGOs or other [inaudible]?

**GENERAL WOOD:** Yes.

**MS. STEPHENSON:** That's been one of the things our office has I think taken an awful lot of pride in is the work that we've done in bridge building with NGOs. An awful lot of us actually come from either actually working for NGOs or working awfully closely with NGOs. I think this was really discussed in Sidney when we tested out the Multinational

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Interagency Group. One of the first questions that the civilian group, the Multinational Interagency Group had was the best way to organize ourselves so that we were developing robust partnerships with the NGOs. Should we channel it through one? Should we allow it to develop organically? What was the best way of getting issues reported back and fed in? So it was a big and important issue that the civilians put on the table right at the very beginning was the partnership with the NGOs. So I think that's part of that [inaudible] we help.

When we come in and we talk about strengthening these processes, I think we are helpful in creating an understanding with the military that the NGOs are, we need to think of them as full partners as well and I'm very pleased with watching that evolution and thinking on the two sides, is that we both bring things to the understanding of the problem and what the solution set should be, and that by creating the ability to actually share those insights, those perspectives, give advice and guide, we're just so much better off from being able to have those kinds of conversations.

So yes, it was one of the very first orders of business that we did in Sidney was to determine how we were going to work with the NGOs.

**MEDIA:** What role will they have in this experiment? Which ones?

**MS. STEPHENSON:** We basically worked out -- You have to go and you talk to them and part of what you simulate in this is that you have to reach out to the NGOs and talk to them. So part of what the MNIG does is it does a fair bit of that outreach to the NGOs and brings that back in.

Just like we get the calls from Joint Forces Command where the Multinational Interagency Group will be, we'll call back into our conference room back in my office, S/CRS, where we will have the whole array of interagency players there that are answering the questions. Some of those questions may very well be about what is a major relief organization going to do. We will then undertake to actually get a coordinated response back on that.

**GENERAL WOOD:** I would mention that USAID is a very active player in this and they have connections, obviously, coordination with a number of relief organizations. We also will have InterAction, that represents a number of NGO organizations. So then we are involved obviously with the UN as an observer, through UN and in touch with those various actors.

They add to so much in terms of the accuracy of this environment and to the requirement to account for their role, their needs, their interest, and on occasion obviously the fact that they're not going to be in full agreement, clearly, with whatever national or whatever international efforts are under way. That's just a fact in terms of what they take on as responsibilities and what we're working with. So we cannot leave them out. It's important to bring them in, primarily through those two agencies.

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**MEDIA:** Is there any similar initiative in the Pacific theater? Any effort like this one to game out scenarios with our Asian allies in Japan and Korea?

**GENERAL WOOD:** Yes. I can tell you that the Air Force is interested in the Pacific area in terms of one of their larger experiments and exercises in the year ahead, so I know that's working. Of course there's the standard pattern of exercises that are ongoing in the Pacific. Not so much experiments on this scale, but operational exercises, Yamasakura which recently occurred. There are some others, Cobra Gold. But those are operationally oriented exercises. In terms of the experimental set, the one I can think of right now is primarily the one that the Air Force is interested in conducting in the years ahead.

**MEDIA:** Do you know the name of it?

**GENERAL WOOD:** Unified Endeavor? Unified Engagement? I'll get you the name. It's UE. I'm just trying to remember what the E part was.

**MEDIA:** My name's Ruby Johnson, Inside the Army.

I was wondering if you could tell me what Army [inaudible] exercise and [inaudible] participating [inaudible]?

**GENERAL WOOD:** There's not really a unit as such participating. There are a number of elements within Joint Forces Command that represent the services, but there's no US Army units involved.

**MEDIA:** Have the number of US forces participating in the exercise [inaudible] because of the [inaudible] Iraq?

**GENERAL WOOD:** Not in this experiment. I would say that distributed operations, the way we're distributing things is lessening the load that [inaudible] and it's much more efficient.

**MEDIA:** The list of countries. Finland and Sweden. Is that a little unusual for them to be involved?

**GENERAL WOOD:** What's interesting is for instance Finland has some very good planning tools and processes that they use with the interagency and with NGOs so they are a very important partner to take those sorts of solutions and see how they can strengthen the coalition operations. And Sweden is certainly an active participant in coalitions as they occur, so their insights are important as well. So that's how this expands. It's not NATO-specific. Australia, for instance, is engaged. But we essentially go to those nations where this becomes mutually beneficial in terms of experimentation as they look at their coalition requirements or bring special coalition capabilities to the table. So it's an expanding group.

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**LTC SMITH:** First, thank you so much for the outstanding turnout today. I think it's an important experiment. You all had some great questions. I do have to get them somewhere else but I want to offer up an opportunity for Ms. Stephenson or General Wood to make final comments and then we can get out of y'all's way and they can go to the next event.

**GENERAL WOOD:** This does represent a partnership that's important. It's important not just early on in planning, but most of our Soldiers, Sailors, Airmen and Marines understand the importance of this relationship in execution. It's I think essential work. It's a natural to play this experiment out with our coalition partners, and it's really heartening to see the increased engagement, involvement and full strong support of interagency players not only in the US Government but we're seeing also in other nations, them also bringing these kinds of skills to these types of experiments. It really is heartening to see that kind of development.

**LTC SMITH:** One last question.

**MEDIA:** Tony Capaccio with Bloomberg News.

To what extent has this been driven by Gordon England's stability operations memorandum that came down, it was probably signed in early November. [Inaudible] flowed out from that?

**GENERAL WOOD:** Of course you know when that came out, and this experiment's been going on since before 9/11. So it is a natural complement, this experiment is, to precisely that sort of initiative and will be very helpful to us in compliance and in execution of the directive itself. So this is just hand in glove with that sort of directive and a necessary development for us to say okay, if that's now to be, if we need to shift our focus and understand the setting in this environment, how do we execute? How do we do it with our multinational [inaudible]. So I think it is reinforcing, complementary. However, that came clearly with guidance in recent times, but we have already been walking this path together for a little bit, and I think we're going to add a good chapter.

**MEDIA:** This is a concrete manifestation of what he's --

**GENERAL WOOD:** Absolutely. I would agree.

**LTC SMITH:** Thank you all very much. We appreciate your time.

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